Improving the Quality of Washington's Natural Resources
Tollgate #1

1. Key indicators that will provide the best evidence to the citizen that this result is being achieved.

Indicators	Same, Modified, New?
Toxics Released into the Environment from major industrial sources or diesel soot emissions	New- Replaces percentage of days with unhealthy air
Percentage of assessed rivers and streams that meet standards for fish and swimming	Same – How the indicator is measured will change to ensure data consitency.
Rate of land converted to urban uses.	Same – Still determining data availability
Trends in fish stocks and wildlife populations	Modified – Now tracking returns of listed fish rather than just classifying stocks as healthy

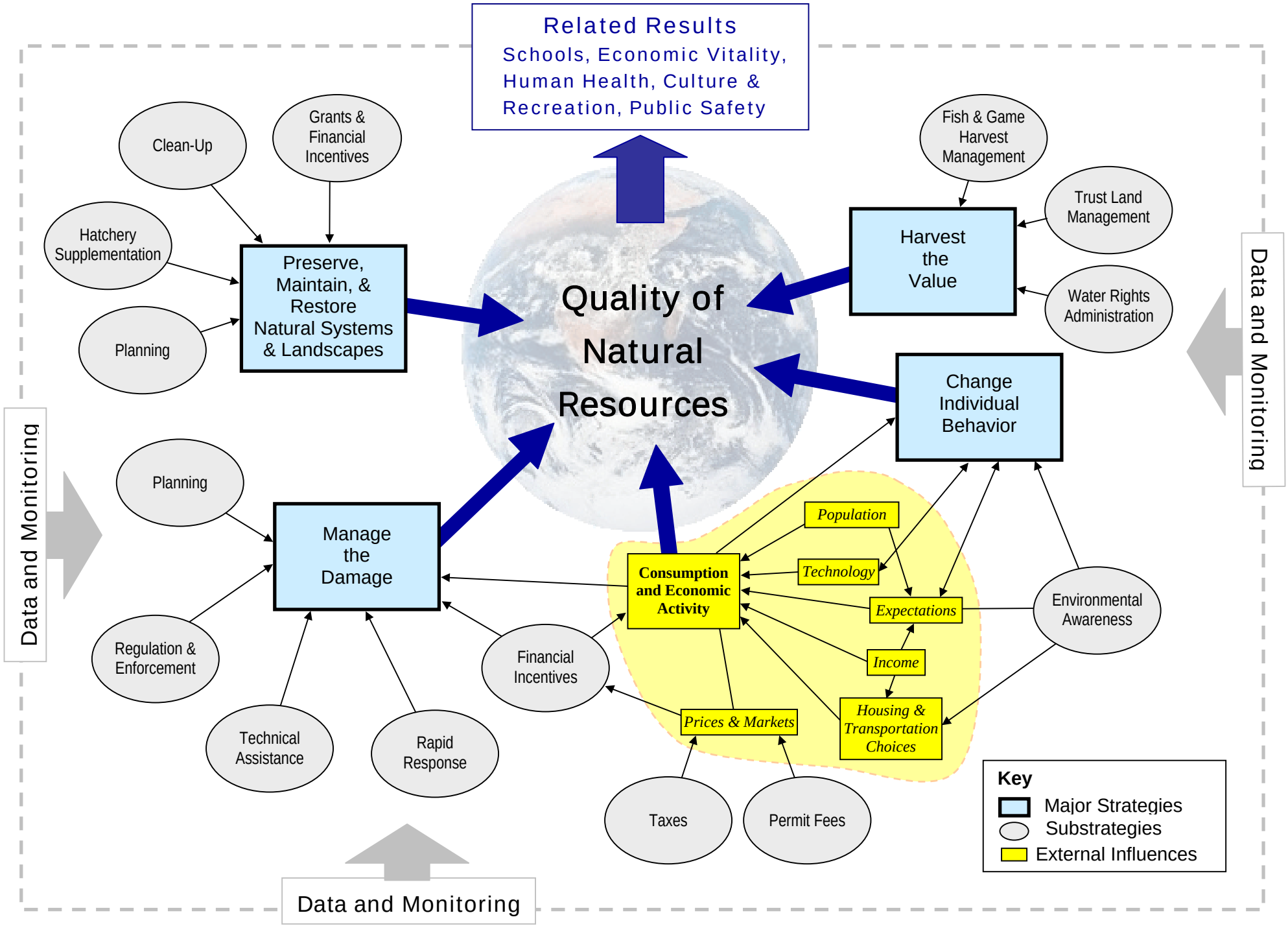
Improving natural resources in Washington depends on attention to and progress on four interrelated components:

- Healthy Air
- Clean and Abundant Water
- Diverse and Productive Habitats, including natural or semi-natural landscapes
- Diverse, Healthy and Abundant Populations of Fish, Wildlife and Native Plants.

In reviewing measures used in the first POG, it was decided that the previous indicator for air quality was not very robust nor indicative of Washington's primary air quality concern, air toxics. We are considering several alternative indicators including toxic releases to air, land and water or pounds from industrial sources and/or diesel soot emissions per year.

The indicator for trends in fish stocks was also modified to track trends in the returns of salmon and steelhead listed under the endangered species act. This is a more dynamic measure of our success in salmon recovery. Final, measures are still under review.

Natural Resources Results Map



3. An initial assessment of the success or failure of current strategies

A. Does the current budget include funding for all of the significant strategies identified by the teams last time? Which strategies were <u>not</u> funded in the budget?

The table below shows the total funds allocated in the original POG by major strategy and the actual level of funding for the 2003-05 Biennium. This does not include funding in the capital budget that was included in the original POG. The comparison between the original POG and the actual budget is complicated by the fact that several agencies reworked their activities, which could change significantly the amount of funding for each major strategy.

Major Strategy	Original POG	Percentage	2003-05 Actuals	Percentage
Preserve and Restore Natural Systems	$939 Million	48%	$368 Million	38.4%
Manage the Damage	$490 Million	25.1%	$272 Million	28.3%
Harvest the Value	$133 Million	6.8%	$172 Million	18.1%
Data to Drive Better Decisions	$200 Million	10.2%	$127 Million	13.3%
Regulatory Reform	$ 185 Million	9.5%	$0	0%
Public Knowledge and Education	$6.7 million	.4%	$18.3 Million	1.9%
Total	$1.955 Billion		$ 958 Million	

All major strategies except regulatory reform were funded, although at reduced levels in the final budget. This was due primarily to a funds allocation in the original POG that was significantly greater than what was likely to be available.

Few if any of the Key Innovations were funded or if they were funded it was at a significantly reduced level.

- **Watershed Planning (Proposed $29.2 M)** - $14.9 M was funded to provide grants and support for watershed and salmon recovery planning. Additional grants and technical assistance were not funded.
- **Regulatory Reform – (Proposed $185 M)** - No funding was provided to develop new strategies to win compliance with natural regulatory requirements, and restore and expand tax incentives. Some agencies did shift resources to improve regulatory efforts. Tax exemptions were provided for development of biodiesal and fuel cells.
- **Enhance Local Land Stewardship – (Proposed $65.3 M) -** $7.7M was provided to increase grants to update local government growth management and shoreline plans Grants for local monitoring and compliance activities did not occur.

- **Capital Infrastructure – (Proposed $41 M) –** A total of $9.4M was provided for water conveyance infrastructure and irrigation efficiency projects. No funding was included for $2 B+ in bonds to address water storage, stormwater, and implement watershed and salmon recovery plans. Aside from moving the Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account Grant Program from DNR to IAC, suggestions to consolidate natural resource capital grant programs to improve targeting of results were not adopted.
- **Data and Monitoring – (Proposed $31.5 M) -** $550,000 was made available to implement the salmon monitoring and natural resource data strategies. Funding to fill in data gaps was not included.

B. Looking at the performance and indicator information available to you at this time, how would you describe progress in achieving this result?

It is difficult to see any immediate changes in the broad indicators that were selected because detection of natural resources trends often takes several years. Progress has been made in some areas but given increases in population, driving and consumption and the lack of additional funding, achieving significant and/or immediately measurable results in the natural resources area is slow.

C. What are the most significant areas of success in this result area today?

In the last several years there have been many areas of success. However, actual improvements in the environment are generally, yet to be detected.

- Reduced toxic diesel emission by 12.4% (1,511 tons) since 1996. In 2004 launched the nation's largest school-bus retrofit program to reduce toxic diesel emissions.
- Adopted a mercury chemical action plan and will begin the development of a Persistent Bioaccumulative Toxics (PBTs) action plan for flame retardants (PBDEs) .
- Returns of listed fish are increasing. It is unclear how much is occurring due to our own efforts or due to favorable ocean conditions.
- Water Quality is improving. During 2002 and 2003 the Department of Health eased or removed restrictions on commercial harvest of 4,600 acres of shellfish beds from six different areas of Western Washington.
- Since 2000, 28,437 acres of habitat along streams have been restored through the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.
- On average, over the last four years, 325 stream miles of fish habitat have been opened annually.

- Since 2001, 60,000 miles of forested streams have come under increase protection with new timber harvest regulations resulting from the Forest and Fish legislation.

D. Where do you see the most significant performance gaps? Do these gaps represent the failure of a strategy, the failure to fund a given strategy, or something else?

The most significant gaps exist in our work to preserve, restore and maintain natural systems. Gaps exist in our ability to provide adequate and clean water for both instream and out of stream uses. There are major contaminated upland and aquatic sites in need of clean-up. Much needs to be done to restore, preserve and maintain riparian habitat.

These gaps primarily represent the failure to fully fund the strategy. Although the state has undertaken a significant effort in watershed and salmon recovery planning, it has not identified adequate funding to implement these plans. The Phase 4 watershed plan implementation committee has identified a gap of $6 billion over ten years to implement watershed plans. There are hundreds of millions of dollars in costs to clean-up contaminated upland and aquatic sites. Eighty-four percent (418 sites) of 496 highest priority toxic sites are still in progress or pending clean-up. A lack of monitoring data also makes it difficult to detect trends and ensure that we are changing our management practices based upon observed results. State lands are not adequately maintained to meet expectations of neighbors and fully comply with weed control requirements.

E. Where are the most significant opportunities to improve results?

With the completion of watershed plans, significant progress in improving water supply, instream flows and water quality is possible with additional infrastructure and grant dollars. Completion of regional salmon recovery plans will also allow better targeting of salmon recovery projects. With the Department of Ecology's completing it's "Beyond Waste Plan," significant opportunity exists to reduce solid and hazardous waste during the manufacturing process by emphasizing design with non-toxic materials and zero waste. Continued progress in reducing diesel soot is also possible and to a lesser extent greenhouse gases. The Hatchery Scientific Review Group completion of its state hatcheries review provides insight into how to improve our investments in state hatcheries to protect and restore listed salmonids while also providing fish for recreational and commercial harvest. Implementation of a new sustainable harvest level for state trust lands will allow more active development of healthy forest stands along with sustained trust revenue.